Nixon Eulogizes Hoover as a 'Giant'

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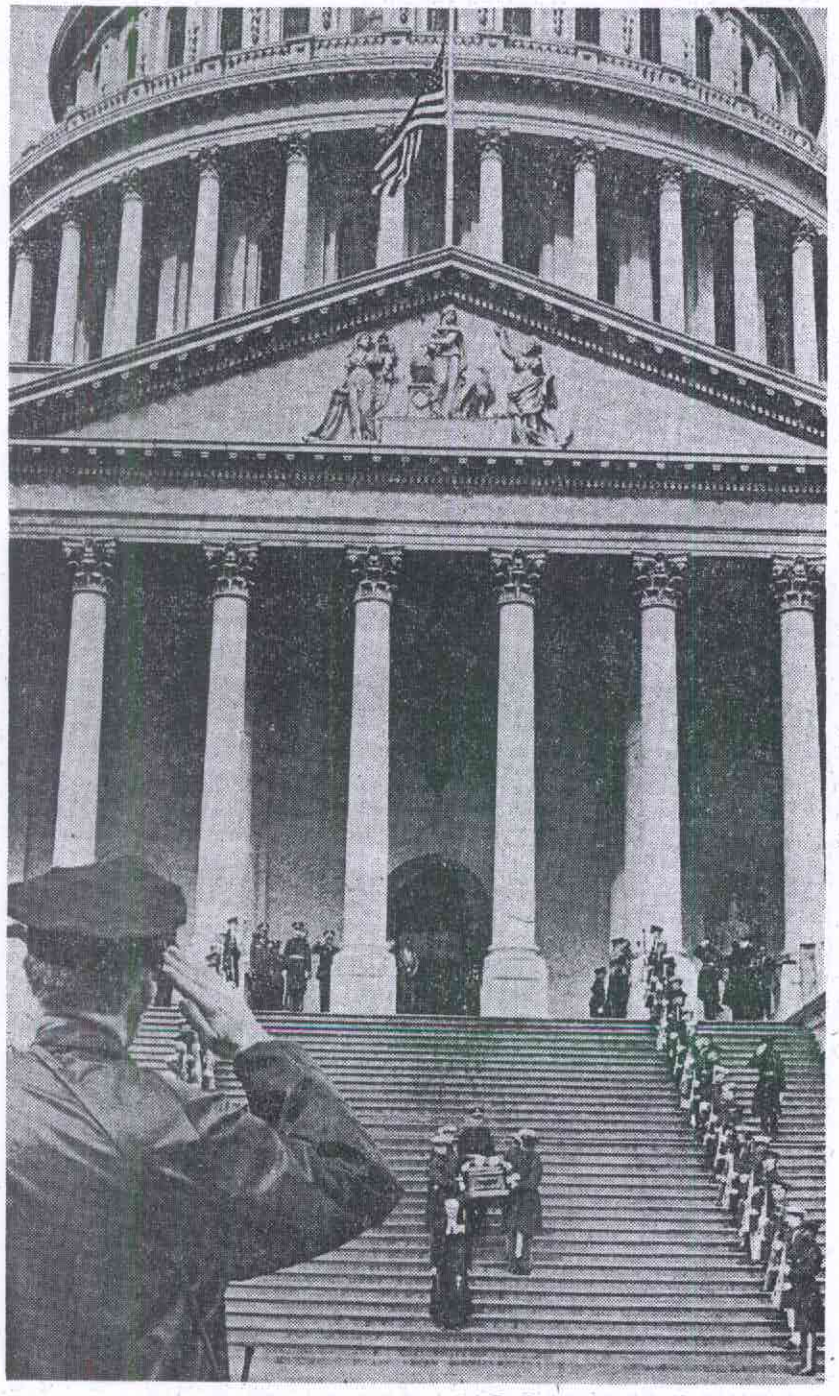

By Charles Del Vecchio—The Washington Post

Body of the FBI director is borne from the Capitol rotunda to burial services.

J. Edgar Hoover was buried beside his parents and sister on a gentle hill yesterday—13 blocks from the Southeast Washington row house where he was born 77 years ago.

The FBI's original and legandary director, who died in his sleep Monday night, lay in state at the Capitol Rotunda Wednesday—the only civil servant ever accorded that honor.

Yesterday morning, his coffin was taken to the National Presbyterian Church, where President Nixon eulogized Hoover before a funeral gathering estimated at 2,500 as "one of the giants" and "a peace officer without peer."

Then, convoyed by 11 motorcycles and 11 limousines, Hoover was borne to the Congressional Cemetery, a modest, grassy plot beside the Anacostia River and the D.C. Morgue.

The American flag on his coffin was presented to his longtime friend and chief aide, Clyde Tolson, who said solemnly, "Thank you. Thank you very much."

Then, as scores of agents watched with hands over hearts, as friends and personal staff bowed their heads, as two small boys quietly stole some white mums from a funeral garland nearby, J. Edgar Hoover was buried.

He had been a man, President Nixon said in his eulogy, whose "long life brimmed over with magnificent achievement and dedicated service to this country.

"He was one of those unique individuals who, by all odds, was the best man for a vitally important job," the President said, in a subdued, 11-minute address. "His powerful leadership . . . helped to keep steel in America's backbone, and the flame of freedom in America's soul."

"While eight Presidents came and went," Mr. Nixon said, ". . . the director stayed at his post."

The FBI will stand as "a living memorial " to Hoover, the President suggested, because he built it "totally on principle, not on personality." And "those principles of respect

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Hoover Is Eulogized

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for law, order and justice will come to govern our national life more completely than ever before," he predicted.

"The American people today are tired of disorder, disruption and disrespect for law," the President said. "America wants to come back to the law as a way of life, and as we do come back to the law, the memory of this great man, who never left the law as a way of life, will be accorded even more honor. . . "

"Let us be true to his legacy," the President urged. 'Let us honor him . . . by honoring all the men and women who carry on in this nobel profession of helping to keep the peace in our society."

Then, quoting from the Psalms, the President offered this epitaph: "Great peace have they which love thy law."

"J. Edgar Hoover loved the law of his God," the President declared.

When he finished, the President was joined by Dr. Edward L. R. Elson, pastor of the church, minister to the funeral, chaplain of the Senate and Hoover's close friend.

Together, the two men stood silently before the coffin for 45 seconds, hands at their sides, backs to the gathering. Then, to an organ dirge, they led the gathering ot.

The President and Mrs. Nixon sat during the service next to Mamie Eisenhower. Her husband's funeral was held in the same church and attended by many of the same dignitaries 38 months ago.

Behind them was Chief Justice Warren Burger; the two recent Nixon Supreme Court appointees, William Rehnquist and Lewis Powell; and former Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

Across an aisle sat Vice President Agnew, acting Attorney General Richard Kleindienst, and Philadelphia's Mayor Frank Rizzo.

In the back of the church, sitting among FBI agents and officials, was Efrem Zimbalist Jr., who was handpicked by Hoover. to star in the television series "The FBI."